

Message Text

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ACTION AID-59

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FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4179

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

US MISSION GENEVA 2179

USUN NEW YORK 1997

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AFDROUGHT

SUBJECT: DROUGHT EAST AFRICA - SUDAN

REF: A. KHARTOUM 0705

B. ROME 4168

SUMMARY: WFP HAS RECEIVED INFORMATION FROM SURVEY TEAM BUT APPARENTLY IT IS ABOUT WHAT ONE WOULD EXPECT I.E. PRESENTLY MANAGEABLE BUT FOOD STOCKS ARE BEING RUN DOWN (HEAVIER THAN USUAL INFLUX OF PEOPLE; SMUGGLING GRAIN OUT PARTICULARLY TO CHAD) AND "COULD DEVELOP INTO" SERIOUS SITUATION. PROBLEM APPARENTLY NOT SO MUCH DROUGHT IN SUDAN BUT RATHER IMPACT OF USUAL BUT ABNORMALLY HEAVY "EXTERNAL" FACTORS ON A REMOTE AREA WHOSE SAFETY MARGIN IS NORMALLY THIN. GOV'T REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE PROBABLY TO BE EXPECTED BUT WOULD PRESENT DILEMMA BECAUSE OF LOGISTIC FACTORS.

1. FODAG HAS NOT YET HAD ACCESS TO THE REPORT BUT INFORMATION FROM NA & NE BRANCH CHIEF (WHO ACCOMPANIED AQUINO ON RECENT TRIP TO SUDAN, AND WHO RECEIVED AND READ REPORT LAST NIGHT) SUGGESTS NO REAL SURPRISES. APPARENTLY VERY MIXED PICTURE IN DARFUR

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AREA AND ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE TO TELL EXTENT TO WHICH INFLUX

OF PEOPLE (APPARENTLY PRIMARILY FROM CHAD AND NIGERIA REPEAT NIGERIA) EXCEEDS NORMAL PATTERN. OBVIOUSLY EXTENT SMUGGLING ALSO NOT MEASURABLE BUT REPORTS OF 10 FOLD INCREASE IN DURRA PRICES OVER THE BORDER BOUND HAVE SUBSTANTIAL EFFECT.

2. ONLY PRESENCE ON TEAM OF PERSON KNOWLEDGEABLE VARIOUS AREA LANGUAGES MADE IT POSSIBLE FOR OBSERVATIONS ON PEOPLE BE MORE THAN ENTIRELY CONJECTURAL AS TO AREA ORIGIN ETC. INTERVIEWS NOT SUCCESSFUL DEVELOPING MUCH RELIABLE INFORMATION WHETHER REFUGEES FROM DROUGHT OR OTHER REASONS NOR EXTENT TO WHICH NUMBERS EXCEED NORMAL MIGRATORY MOVEMENTS AND SEASONAL LABOR.

3. NO GOVERNMENT REQUEST YET FOR ASSISTANCE BUT ONE IS LIKELY. WFP REACTION PROBABLY ONE OF WILLINGNESS TO PROVIDE BUT SEES NO WAY SHORT OF AIRLIFT TO GET FOOD TO AREA PRIOR NEXT CROP. EVEN SHIPMENTS IN FROM OTHER AREAS SUDAN PRESENT LOGISTICS/TIMING PROBLEMS WHICH APPEAR ALMOST INSURMOUNTABLE. APPARENTLY FIELD MISSION GUESSING THAT IF REQUEST COMES IT WILL BE BASED ON SUPPLEMENTARY FEEDING ABOUT 10,000 PEOPLE.

4. UNDERSTAND UNDRO SENT MESSAGE FAO, MORSE ETC. ABOUT 4 APRIL REFERRING OFFICIAL REQUEST SUDAN GOV'T 12 MARCH FOR UNDRO COORDINATION/ASSISTANCE. MSG INDICATES SITUATION COULD BECOME CRITICAL AND QUERIES RESOURCES AVAILABLE. VOLPE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
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